

The Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists

Council Report, 2021-2022

On behalf of the Council, I would like to summarise in this report the work done in the last year and highlight our plans for the future.

The College is fully committed to the principle of honesty, integrity and fair play in the delivery of services to the public, and hence a code of conduct for members of Council, Boards and Committees has been developed, which is aligned with the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine's Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Committees. This Code sets out the basic standard of conduct expected of all Members of Council and its Boards, Committees and Sub-committees; and the HKCA's policy on acceptance of advantage and conflict of interest in connection with one's official duties.

Anaesthesiology

SOT Retreat was successfully held on 5th December 2021 for SOTs, Deputy SOTs and members of Board of Education. At the retreat, crucial topics in medical education and anaesthesia training were discussed, which brought forth ideas for further implementation in the future. We took this valuable opportunity to not only open communication channels with SOTs, but also strengthen our community of practice in anaesthesia training, as well as empower our SOTs to join the Board of Education in working towards a positive and meaningful culture of learning and training in our specialty.

The 5th wave of COVID-19 overwhelmed the public healthcare system in early 2022 and quite a number of anaesthesia trainees were deployed during this challenging period of COVID pandemic. The Board of Education exercised flexibility and made corresponding adjustments to training and rotations (if COVID-related), that the period was regarded as recognised training.

The Workplace-based Assessment (WBA) Train-the-trainers Workshop scheduled for 26th March 2022 has been postponed to 30th July 2022 due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2022.

In collaboration with the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA), the Perioperative Medicine Committee organised its inaugural perioperative medicine webinar on 28th May 2022 which attracted over 400 delegates and 200 participants watching the webinar live.

Welfare and Wellbeing

In order to increase the awareness of workplace welfare and to promote psychological well-being, the Welfare Workgroup conducted a survey focusing on members' and fellows' well-being in collaboration with the Trainee Committee. Bullying and harassment were identified as uncommon but significant issues to our fellows and trainees. Moreover, workplace stressors were noted to be present for both fellows and trainees in the survey, and this indeed helps provide direction for the Welfare Workgroup on how to further provide support in the future. The Welfare Workgroup is actively discussing and seeking ways to enhance the well-being of the HKCA fellows and members. The College has allocated resources in this area to explore the applicability of positive psychology among our fellows and members. The plan includes organising workshops and developing a webpage on positive psychology. Further details will be announced soon.

Examinations

The outbreak of the COVID-19 in early 2022 brought great challenge and uncertainty to Board of Examinations, but with dedication and resilience, the postponed online intermediate, and final examinations were held successfully by June 2022. At the time when the Board was discussing whether or not proceeding the examinations, the degree of uncertainty made it nearly impossible to accurately predict what the picture would be like over the next few months for candidates and examiners. After carrying out a thorough risk analysis on the delivery options, exhausting all possible options to conduct the examinations as original planned, and having a thorough discussion with the members of Board of Examinations and Council, a difficult decision had to be made. With hindsight, it was a correct decision to postpone the examinations, and convert them to online format. The principal reason for conducting the examination in an online format was that due to the unpredictable nature of the pandemic situation, all other formats for conducting the examinations in a safe and timely manner had been rendered unfeasible. The integrity of the examination, nevertheless, is of utmost importance, and extra measures have been in place to carry out online examinations in a fair and secure manner, and comprehensive guidelines and regulations have been developed for online examinations, which was in response to the investigation panel's recommendations. Board of Examinations will continue to refine the examination system and to uphold the standing of training and a reliable, yet effective examination system.

Accreditation

Hospital inspection exercise is conducted every 5 years and the last one was conducted in 2019. As per the recommendation of the inspection in 2019, data review of Gleneagles Hong Kong Hospital in 2021. An application for hospital accreditation had been received from Tin Shui Wai Hospital in 2021, it was accredited as HKCA training centre after hospital inspection.

Intensive Care Medicine

After more than three-year's work with Board of Critical Care Medicine (CCM) of the Hong Kong College of Physicians, the Joint Syllabus for Intensive Care Medicine was finally developed and implemented for trainees who commence their IC training programme on 1st July 2022 and onward. The new Syllabus consists of 11 domains together with various workplace-based assessments (WBA). A new electronic portfolio system has been developed and 4 WBA Workshops for SOTs and trainers have been organised together with HKJC Innovative Learning Centre for Medicine (HKJCILCM). 24 Fellows (65% of the Fellows in Intensive Care) were trained and they are ready for conducting WBA for trainees.

The Council would like to express their gratitude to the members of the Joint Curriculum Workgroup in Intensive Care Medicine for their tremendous time and effort spent in development of the new curriculum and also to Hong Kong Society of Critical Care Medicine for their sponsorship of the workshops and the e-Portfolio.

Young Fellows Committee (YFC)

The YFC, which was established in June 2022, is a new platform for young specialists to engage in college affairs and aims to bring young fellows closer together across our specialty. Forging connections, professional growth, and enhancing well-being will be top priorities on the committee's agenda. YFC is committed to serving their peers, they are bold enough to speak out on matters that are important to young fellows, they take the initiative to identify the unmet needs of young specialists, and will strive to address these needs in ways that would be innovative and appealing to their generation.

Trainees Committee

The Trainee Committee aims to strengthen communication between trainees and the College in order to improve the training and welfare of HKCA trainees. During last year, the second Annual Trainee Survey was conducted. The survey covered aspects including teaching and research opportunities, education resources and exams, support to trainees during COVID pandemic. Together with the Welfare Committee, the survey also focused on the wellbeing of trainees, such as quality of life, psychological health related to workplace experiences. On way forward, the Committee will continue to work closely with the Welfare Committee on improving wellbeing of trainees, training and education.

Clinical Simulation Committee (CSC)

CSC has implemented an accreditation program for sedation training with the healthcare partners. The aim is to highlight the requirement and standards to conduct safe sedation, enrich knowledge on drugs, monitoring and management of common adverse events. This year, Gleneagles Hospital Hong Kong and Union Hospital are accredited as Sedation Course Training Centres to conduct Sedation Training Programmes.

The College jointly organised with HKU Faculty of Dentistry's Institute of Advanced Dentistry (IAD) for their dentistry to provide Sedation Safety in Dentistry Course at Hong Kong Jockey Club Innovative Learning Centre for Medicine. The course aims to provide necessary knowledge and basic skills to dentists, dental assistants and nurses to facilitate safe sedation and minimise complications.

In order to promote simulation educations, the College sponsored fellows and members to participate in Debriefing Skills for Simulation Instructors Course (DSSI), Comprehensive Simulation Educator Course (CSEC), local simulation course or conference. Two sponsorship applications were received and approved in 2021. CSC extended the collaboration with Hospital Authority for 3 years to organise simulation courses.

Guidelines Committee

The College acknowledged that fellows are encountering increasing number of COVID-19 patients presenting for elective and emergency surgeries. Unlike fellows working in public hospitals, fellows in private sector, without departmental support, are under enormous pressure to make decision to proceed surgery or not. Hence, with reference to local situation and international guidelines, Guidelines Committee developed "Live Recommendation on Surgical Patient Safety in Relation to COVID-19 Infection and Vaccination" to help alleviate the pressure of our private practice fellows. This regularly reviewed recommendation was presented in the Academy's council meeting and other interested Colleges were invited to join to collaborate.

ASM

The ASM 2021, with the theme of “Overcoming the Risks” was successfully held on 20th-21st November 2021 in hybrid format. It was a pleasure to see those delegates, who attended the meeting physically, found it enjoyable to mingle with their old friends as well as to visit the healthcare industry exhibition. With the hot topics such as artificial intelligence, big data, and well-being in workplace, the 2-day conference attracted over 400 delegates.

The ASM 2022 will be held on 19th-20th November 2022 in hybrid format. The College recognises the disruptions caused by COVID-19 in unprecedented ways, the council of HKCA, and Society of Anaesthetists of Hong Kong (SAHK) decided to offer discounted registration fee for ASM 2022 as a token of support to our fellows and trainees in these unsettled and turbulent times.

International Relations and Activities

The International Academy of Colleges of Anaesthesiologists (IACA), in which HKCA is one of the founding Colleges, hosted a webinar focusing on doctors’ wellbeing on 8th December 2021, and another webinar focusing on environmental sustainability in anaesthesia and pain medicine on 8th June 2022.

The 2021 Combined Spring Meeting (CSM) – “Moving with pain”, jointly organised by the Faculty of Pain Medicine ANZCA and the Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists, was held virtually on 16th October 2021. This combined meeting was planned to be held in Queensland, New Zealand in 2020. However, due to the pandemic, the meeting was postponed to 2021 and was changed to online meeting.

College Finances

The College finance is in good shape according to the financial report. The Council will make every effort to ensure that College funds are used purposefully and judiciously.

Acknowledgement

I am very much indebted to the council for their unfailing support and contribution to the College, especially to Dr Yee-Eot Chee and Dr Phoon-ping Chen (Vice-Presidents), Dr Simon Chan (Honorary Secretary), Dr Timmy Chan (Honorary Treasurer), and Chairpersons of all Boards and Committees.

My special thanks go to Ms Kristy Cheung, the CEO of the College, and the other staff members including Ms Fonia Lam, Ms Josephine Ho, Ms Pinky Tsui and Ms Felix Keung. We also would like to thank our Honorary Legal Advisor, Mr Peter Man, for his invaluable legal advice. Last but not least, I wish to thank all members, fellows, examiners, supervisors of training, facilitators and instructors for their continuing support.

Dr Hing-yu So

President

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